

well-known to be an active member in several organizations within the Whiting community, including: the Whiting-Robertsdale Chamber of Commerce, the Knights of Columbus Wives Club, the Daughters of Isabella, the Whiting-Robertsdale Historical Society, the Sacred Heart Rosary Society, and the Friends of the Library.

While Marge's everyday presence will be missed at Whiting City Hall, she will now have a chance to spend more time to those closest to her—her family. A loving wife, mother, and grandmother, Marge's commitment to her community is surpassed only by her love for her family. Marge and her loving husband, Henry, have been married for an astonishing 55 years. With Marge's retirement, they plan to spend as much time as possible with their 3 children: Nancy (Michael) Pappas, James (Martha) Drewniak, and Ron (Lisa) Drewniak, and their adoring grandchildren: Brian and Kelly Pappas and Eric and Scott Drewniak.

Madam Speaker, Marge Drewniak has selflessly given her time and efforts to the people of Whiting, Indiana, throughout her years of service. At this time, I ask that you and all of my distinguished colleagues join me in commending her for her lifetime of service and dedication, and I ask that you join me in wishing her the best of health and happiness in the years to come.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I wish to express my support of H.R. 3043, the Fiscal Year 2008 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act.

I have increasingly heard grave concerns from Rhode Islanders about the cuts and limitations in critical domestic programs over the past 6 years. Currently, one in six Americans is without health insurance, our schools are in desperate need of resources to meet the standards set in No Child Left Behind, and the recent housing slump and credit crunch have left our economy in trouble. Our safety net programs are more important than ever, as Americans work hard to keep their families healthy and their finances in order.

This legislation takes important steps to address the problems faced by so many Americans and prioritizes funding for those programs that have suffered the most under cuts by the Republican leadership in recent years. I am proud that Democrats have crafted a bill that will increase funding for Community Health Centers and Title VII programs, designed to increase access to health services for the medically underserved. This measure will also improve education by targeting resources toward special education and Title I grants to help low-income students and by increasing the maximum Pell Grant from \$4,310

to \$4,925, making college more affordable for many students. And it rejects the President's proposed cuts for medical research at the National Institutes of Health by supplying a level of funding that will sustain existing, cutting-edge research into diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and heart disease. Finally, it provides \$2.4 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—\$250 million more than the current level—offering much-needed relief to the residents of Rhode Island, who are now facing the highest prices for home heating oil on record.

The Democratic leadership has also addressed the challenges facing our veterans by restoring accountability and oversight to ensure they receive the care they deserve. H.R. 3043 provides the biggest increase in veterans benefits in over 75 years, and the need could not be more urgent. This legislation includes an increase of \$18 billion above the current level for military construction and veterans affairs, and is also \$3.8 billion above the President's request. I am also pleased that this bill recognizes the concerns and reflects the advice of our veterans, by not only meeting, but exceeding the independent budget request, a needs estimate published by four veterans' service groups. This increase is critical to meet the needs of the many returning veterans who are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Traumatic Brain Injury and require better care to successfully rebuild their lives. Additional funding will help alleviate the backlogged claim process and provide much-needed maintenance for VA health care facilities. The support shown by this Congress is a testament to the priority all of us place on our veterans.

In closing, I want to express my thanks to Chairman OBEY for reconciling so many diverse needs to craft a fair and fiscally responsible package, and reiterate my support for H.R. 3043.

CELEBRATING ABINGTON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL'S VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT PARTICIPATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Abington Senior High School in Abington Township, PA, on their outstanding participation in the Veteran History Project of the Library of Congress. Students and teachers have contributed their time and skills to preserving the remarkable experiences of our war veterans from all service branches, from World War I to the present day Iraq War, as well as the civilians who supported them. I am privileged to represent these students and teachers in Congress.

The Veterans History Project preserves the legacy of those who have served through the establishment of a permanent national collection, housed in the Library of Congress, of videotaped and recorded interviews, written memoirs, and wartime letters, diaries, and photographs. Stories and materials are available to anyone visiting the Library. In addition, a web page is created for each veteran who contributes an interview.

As our Nation's World War II and Korean veterans grow older, it is critical that we record their stories. Their experiences offer a priceless window into their dedication and love of country. As the daughter of a Korean War veteran, this effort has special personal meaning for me. We have much to learn from those who have served our Nation, and I wholeheartedly support this important project.

On this Veterans Day, November 12, 2007, I am proud to recognize Abington Senior High School's Veterans History Project participation at a special event, Preserving Their Stories: A Salute to Veterans History Project Volunteers, at the Hiway Theatre in Jenkintown. This special celebration will bring together Americans, both young and older, with veterans of all ages, to honor their common service to their fellow citizens and country.

Madam Speaker, once again I congratulate all of the Veterans History Project participants for their contributions to capturing the experiences of war veterans, thus honoring the lives and contributions of these extraordinary Americans.

IN HONOR OF NAVY VETERAN AND PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR ERNAL UNDERWOOD

HON. CHRIS CANNON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, as Veteran's Day approaches, I rise in strong support of all who have ever worn the uniform. From the fields of Bunker Hill to the streets of Baghdad, and everywhere in between, American service members represent the very best of our Nation and deserve more than we can ever repay. But today I want to pay particular tribute to a resident of my district who is part of an elite club—Ernal Underwood is one of twelve Pearl Harbor survivors currently living in the State of Utah.

Mr. Underwood joined the Navy on January 7, 1941. Less than 1 year later Mr. Underwood found himself docked at Pearl Harbor on the USS *Helena*. On December 7, 1941 an aerial torpedo struck the USS *Helena* while Mr. Underwood was climbing down a ladder below the deck, on his way to write his wife a letter.

After his ship was hit, Mr. Underwood immediately ran to his battle station, picked up his weapon, and engaged the enemy. Mr. Underwood fired until his gun became too hot. After he ran to fetch a bucket of water in order to cool it down, on the way back to his station, he said he had an impression to "stop." A few seconds later fire from an enemy aircraft pelted the cement on both sides of him. Fortunately, Mr. Underwood came away unscathed. Mr. Underwood's best friend was not so lucky. Later, Ernal Underwood was asked to identify the charred body of his best friend, Benjamin Vasser. Mr. Underwood found his buddy badly burned, but alive enough to blink a response to him. That was the last time Mr. Underwood would see his friend alive.

Less than 2 years later on July 6, 1943, Ernal Underwood found himself in the middle of the Kula Gulf battle in the South Pacific. That day the USS *Helena* suffered three direct hits from enemy torpedoes. The ship broke